

Constitutional Writes

The official newsletter of Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site

Spring 2009
Volume 6, Issue 1

100th Anniversary of the NAACP



Daisy Bates (second from right), Wiley Branton (second from left), and two unidentified people.
Courtesy of Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries.

February 12, 2009 marks the centennial celebration of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The mission of the NAACP is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights for all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination.

The NAACP played an instrumental role in the events surrounding the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School in 1957. Daisy Bates, the president of the Arkansas State Conference of the NAACP began an organized effort to encourage students to apply for admission to Little Rock's "white" schools. When they were denied admission, NAACP lawyers filed suit against the district, ultimately arguing the case before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Segregation and white violence against African Americans gave birth to the NAACP. One hundred years ago a multi-racial group including Ida Wells-Barnett, W.E.B. DuBois, Mary White Ovington, Oswald Garrison Villard, and William English Walling met to form an organization to fight lynching and demand justice. This was the beginning of an organized struggle to achieve equal treatment. This year, we pay tribute to this organization and say Happy 100th Birthday NAACP!

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

“Our people have made the mistake of confusing the methods with the objectives. As long as we agree on objectives, we should never fall out with each other just because we believe in different methods, or tactics, or strategy. We have to keep in mind at all times that we are not fighting for separation. We are fighting for recognition as free humans in this society.” *Malcolm X*

The National Park Service commemorates places of conflict by preserving places of historic, cultural, or religious significance to diverse groups of people. Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site stands as a symbol of social change, where individuals exercised their fundamental human rights in pursuance of justice and equality in a land of promise and democracy. I’m looking forward to the collaboration of programs that will encourage a breakdown in social and cultural barriers, increase historical and cultural pride, empower the public, and build upon committed partnerships.

The truest expression of people is found in their traditions and values. As an intercessor for preservation, one of the National Park Service’s utmost goals is to educate, by taking responsive and thoughtful actions toward preserving our birthright heritage. The National Park Service protects and preserves those special places which are important to the American people. Each “special place” has significant meaning to the individuals and communities who use and enjoy it. However, there are many communities who, for various reasons are not connected to a park near them. We will be inclusive to the stories of these people as we reach beyond the boundaries of our site, to discuss the implementation of a more aggressive campaign geared towards generating a conscious movement for human rights nationally. Through our shared history preserved in landmarks, we are able to learn lessons from past events that further enlighten and provide us a place of connection and self-understanding.

It is imperative to assert that the struggle for equality did not end with the *Brown v. Board* decision, based upon the legal redress of “separate but equal,” but that the struggle for equality continues today. As we embark upon the 52nd Anniversary of the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School we will commemorate historical events, with their hopes, victories, and defeats. As we stand in celebration of the human spirit, it is ideal to discuss our theme for the year, “Race and Politics in the 21st Century,” as we pave the way for the next generation.

Robin White, Superintendent

New Bookstore Item!

Congress awarded the Little Rock Nine the country’s highest award - the Congressional Gold Medal - in 1998 in recognition of their courage in desegregating Central High. In 2007, Congress again recognized their achievements and the significance of the 50th Anniversary by authorizing the U.S. Mint to issue a Commemorative Silver dollar.

Both the replica congressional gold medal (\$10.95) and the Little Rock Central High School Desegregation Silver Dollar (\$39.00) are available for purchase at the park bookstore. You can also browse our website for bookstore selection by going to www.nps.gov/chsc and clicking on Bookstore!



Congressional Gold Medal



Little Rock Central High School Desegregation Silver Dollar

New Cultural Landscape Report in Progress

The National Park Service (NPS) is contracting with John Milner Associates, Inc. to produce a Cultural Landscape Report and Guidelines for the area around Central High School. The purpose of this report is to help the NPS and its partners with the Little Rock School District, the City of Little Rock, and neighborhood residents preserve the cultural landscape of the site and its neighborhood setting.

The report will provide a history of the area and document the structures and features that were here in 1957-58. The report also will analyze the landscape's historical significance and integrity (the degree to which it has remained the same as it was in 1957-59) and will provide guidelines for the NPS and others to use to help maintain the historic landscape. For example, if a homeowner in the neighborhood wants to rebuild a front porch and make it look similar to the home's original porch, this Cultural Landscape Report will provide information and examples to help him or her determine the appropriate size, location, and materials used for the porch.

We met with several partners and residents in October to discuss the first draft of the report and this spring, we will host a public meeting to discuss the completed draft report and guidelines. Stay tuned to our website or call for more information about this upcoming meeting.



Aerial photograph of Central High School and the surrounding neighborhood in 1957 from the Arkansas National Guard's "Command Report." Courtesy Arkansas National Guard Museum.

Calling All Boy Scouts!

Boy Scouts now can earn a Scout Ranger Patch, Junior Ranger Badge and a Resource Stewardship Scout Ranger Program certificate either as part of a troop or individually by completing the historic site's Junior Ranger Program, joining a ranger on an interpretive talk or completing volunteer projects at the historic site. A similar program currently is being developed with Girl Scouts.



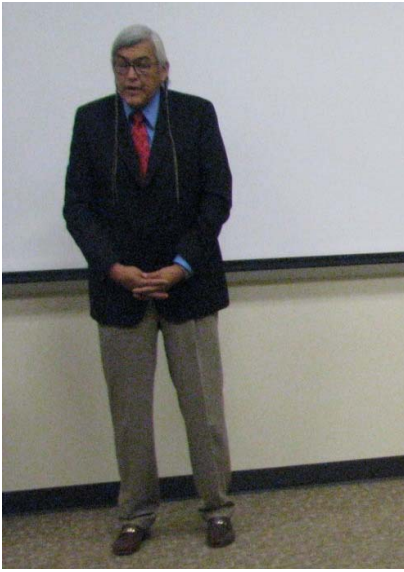
Anyone between the ages 9 through 12 can become a Junior Ranger. The Junior Ranger Program consists of completing an activity booklet which corresponds with the new visitor center exhibits. You will use clues in the exhibit to find

answers to games and activities. Use the booklet as a guide to explore the interactive exhibits and learn about the past and also how you can contribute to America's future. The Scout Ranger Program and Junior Ranger Program are free.



If you are unable to visit the park and would like to be a junior, log on to www.nps.gov/webangers and become a WebRanger. A WebRanger is a Caretaker, an Adventurer, a Learner, a Seeker, and a Discover WebRanger is designed for ages 6-9, 10-12, and 13 and up. You can be a WebRanger!

Civil Rights and Human Rights: American Indian Experiences



Gerard Baker

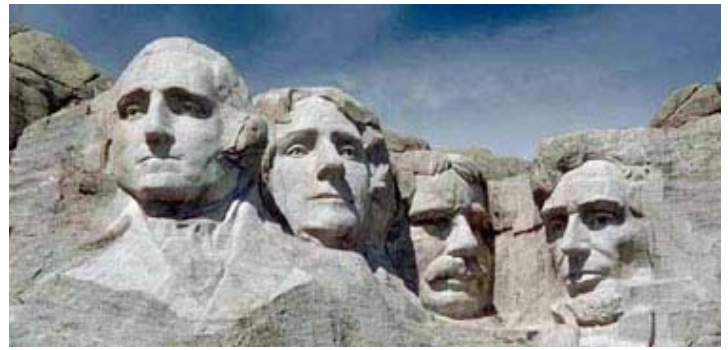
Gerard Baker, Superintendent of Mount Rushmore National Memorial was the guest speaker for our National American Indian Heritage Month in November. Gerard is a full-blood member of the Mandan-Hidatsa Tribe of the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation, in Mandaree, North Dakota. He started his career with the park service in 1979. Since then he has traveled and worked for many sites within the National Park Service. As superintendent, Gerard has supported interpretive programs at Mount Rushmore regarding American Indians as well as the magnificent carving of Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt symbolizing the first 150 years of our nation's history.

Gerard spoke about the parallels between human rights issues as experienced by Native Americans and the civil rights issues experienced by the Little Rock Nine. The staff and visitors really appreciated the history Gerard shared with them. Park Guide Julie Jackson commented, "I was aware of some of the human rights issues associated with American Indians, but after listening to Gerard, I have a better understanding how bad it really is for American Indians - they are treated as property of the United States Government. This is something that is happening

today that few people bother to learn about." Rangers and community members are still talking about the program and how the discussion increased their knowledge and appreciation for Native American history and culture. To learn more about Mount Rushmore National Memorial log onto www.nps.gov/moru.



Model of Mount Rushmore



Mount Rushmore

Volunteers Wanted!



Have you ever thought about volunteering in the community? If so don't look any farther. We're looking for volunteers to help operate the bookstore, and assist with working the information desk and special events.

Volunteering is a great way to be a part of the meaningful and exciting programs at the historic site! For more information, please contact Spirit Trickey-Rowan at 501-374-1957 or spirit_trickey@nps.gov.

2009 Ranger Program Calendar Events



Third Annual "Reel" Civil Rights Film Festival

February 7-8, 2009: Join us at Market Street Cinema for a great lineup of documentaries, including *Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats & Rhymes*, critically acclaimed for its fearless engagement with issues of race, gender violence, and the corporate exploitation of youth culture, and *Where the Water Meets the Sky*, an inspiring story of a group of women in rural Zambia who learn how to make a film as a way to speak out about their lives.

For a complete schedule of films, visit the park website at www.nps.gov/chsc.

"In the Shadow of Little Rock: The Life of Daisy Bates."

February 16, 2009: To commemorate the legacy of civil rights leader Daisy Bates, join us as filmmaker Sharon A. La Cruise previews segments of her documentary "In the Shadow of Little Rock: The Life of Daisy Bates" at Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site visitor center at 11:30 a.m. Discussion will follow the preview. Admission is free. For more information call (501) 374-1957 or email chsc_visitor_center@nps.gov. After the discussion, join park rangers at the Daisy Bates Home National Historic Landmark (1207 West 28th Street) from 2-4 p.m. for tours of Mrs. Bates home.



Picture This... Framing the "Reel" Civil Rights Movement

March 7, 2009: In observance of National Women's History Month park rangers will present *Chisholm '72* (2004; 77 min) which was a featured documentary done by PBS. In 1972, Shirley Chisholm became the first African-American woman to be seriously considered as a presidential candidate. Popcorn and drinks will be provided. Showtime is at 2:00 p.m.

Women and the Economy in the 21st Century

March 10, 2009: In observance of National Women's History Month, Valerie Red-Horse of Cherokee ancestry will discuss women and the economy in the 21st century. Valerie currently heads the Tribal Finance/Tribal Asset Management Division of Western International Securities as well as serving as President of Red-Horse Financial Group, her own financial services holding company in Tarzana, California.

Civil Rights Activist Joanne Bland

March 12, 2009: In observance of National Women's History Month, Civil Rights activist Joanne Bland, co-founder of the National Voting Rights Museum and Institute in Selma, Alabama, will discuss the importance of voting rights. She began her civil rights activism in 1961 as an eight-year-old attending a freedom and voters' meeting presided over by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Charmaine Neville - Struggles of Women in Entertainment

March 27, 2009: Renowned musicians Charmaine Neville and Amasa Miller will hold a music clinic for students in the Little Rock School District on Freedom Songs. Charmaine and Amasa will present a program about the pros and cons of the struggle women have in entertainment. Charmaine is a member of a famous New Orleans music family which includes the Neville Brothers. Amasa is the music director for the Pfister Sisters and pianist with Charmaine Neville. Stay tuned for updates on our website - www.nps.gov/chsc.



Celebrate National Park Week

April 2009: Join park rangers for a ranger-led bike tour in celebration of National Park Week. Rangers will lead an approximate 7 mile bike tour of various sites related to the 1957 crisis at Central High School. Some of the sites on the tour include the L.C. and Daisy Bates Home National Historic Landmark, Terry Mansion (Decorative Arts Museum), Governor's Mansion, and State Capitol. Stay tuned for updates on our website - www.nps.gov/chsc.

Remembering Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

April 4, 2009: In observance of the 41st anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., park rangers will show the 65 minute award winning film *Who Killed Martin?* The film features commentary from James Earl Ray, King's alleged assassin, and Martin Luther King III, son of Dr. King. A pre- and post-viewing discussion will take place discussing how the assassination left the civil rights movement leaderless. Popcorn and drinks will be provided. Showtime is at 2:00 p.m.

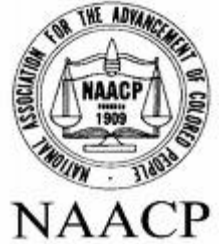
2009 Ranger Program Calendar Events, continued from pg 5.

"Spoken Words Live" Poetry Slam

April 18, 2009: Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site, Power 92, and the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, a Museum of the Department of Arkansas Heritage, will host a "Poetry Slam" in conjunction with the Arkansas Literary Festival. Stay tuned for updates on our website - www.nps.gov/chsc.

Commemorate Brown v Board and Celebrate the NAACP 100th Anniversary

May 2009: Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site will commemorate the 55th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* Supreme Court decision and the 100th Anniversary of the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Celebrating a Century of Equality and Social Justice." Stay tuned for updates on our website - www.nps.gov/chsc.



National Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

May 2, 2009: In observance of Asian Pacific Heritage Month, park rangers present *A Time of Fear* (2005; 60 min.) directed by Sue Williams. In World War II, more than 110,000 Japanese Americans were forced to leave their homes and move to War Relocation Centers across the western United States and in Arkansas. Popcorn and drinks will be provided. Showtime is at 2:00 p.m.

National Gay and Lesbian Pride Month

June 6, 2009: In observance of National Gay and Lesbian Pride Month, park rangers present the the film *Bayard Rustin...Brother Outsider* (1997; 84 min.) which was a featured documentary from PBS. This award winning film goes inside the life of an unsung hero of the Civil Rights Movement, Bayard Rustin. Popcorn and drinks will be provided. Showtime is at 2:00 p.m.

Family Day

July 18, 2009: Central High School National Historic Site will host their 1st annual Family Day at the visitor center from 9:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. Families can join park rangers for a fun-filled day of activities and have the opportunity to learn about the Little Rock Nine and the 1957 crisis. Stay tuned for updates on our website - www.nps.gov/chsc.

Hip Hop Beyond Beats & Rhymes

August 1, 2009: *Hip Hop Beyond Beats & Rhymes* (2006; 61 min.) is an award-winning documentary produced in part by PBS. *Hip Hop Beyond Beats & Rhymes* takes a serious look into the hip-hop community, and how it oppresses many people with its sexism and degradation of women. The documentary interviews hip-hop stars from Jay Z to new up and coming hip-hop artists. Popcorn and drinks will be provided. Showtime is at 2:00 p.m.

National Hispanic Heritage Month

September 5, 2009: In observance of National Hispanic Heritage Month, park rangers present *Mendez vs. Westminster: For All the Children/Para Todos Los Ninos* (2003; 27 min.) directed and produced by Sandra Robbie. In 1943, Gonzalo Mendez sued the Westminster School District of Orange County, California to end segregation of Mexican Americans in the public schools. This court set an important legal precedent for ending racial segregation in the United States. There will be a pre and post viewing discussion. Popcorn and drinks will be provided. Showtime is at 2:00 p.m.



Happy Birthday to the United States Constitution

September 17, 2009: Join park rangers and celebrate the 222nd anniversary of the United States Constitution. Visitors can sign a replica of the Constitution, just as the original signers did in 1787, and test their knowledge of citizenship. Every signer will receive a free, pocket sized copy of the Constitution of the United States.

Racism and Politics in the 21st Century

September 24-25, 2009: Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site will host their 1st symposium, "Racism and Politics in the 21st Century" in commemoration of the 52nd anniversary of desegregation at Central High School. Stay tuned for updates on our website-www.nps.gov/chsc.

This edition of *Constitutional Writes* is dedicated to the late "Park Ranger Amy Garrett." We miss you!

Farewell and Congratulations

Julie Jackson has been a Park Guide at the site for more than four years. She has taken on collateral duties as the site's Library Manager, Recycling Coordinator, and Bike Program Coordinator. Julie is a certified NPS League Cycling Instructor with the League of American Bicyclists and is qualified to teach bike safety and maintenance classes to park rangers. As Bike Program Coordinator, Julie developed 2 bike-with-a ranger programs. The newest tour outlined the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail in Arkansas along the Arkansas River Trail through a "Connect Trails to Parks" grant, which allowed the purchase of 2 new ranger bikes and equipment.

Julie established recycling at the visitor center as the site's Recycling Coordinator. Recycling bins can be found in the lobby area of the visitor center and in the administrative offices for both the public and staff to use. Most recently, Julie became a carded Type 2 Wildland Firefighter.

We are sad to report that Julie is leaving the National Park Service to join the Department of Homeland Security as a Customs and Border Protection Officer in Del Rio, TX. Her current plans are to gain the training and experiences needed to become a commissioned law enforcement officer. Julie loves the National Park Service and knows that it is only a matter of time before she returns. Reflecting on her time in the NPS Julie said, "I have had so many great experiences and met some pretty incredible people in the National Park Service. I am so thankful for having had this opportunity."

From all of the staff here at CHSC, thank you for all of your hard work and dedication. We wish you the best of luck in the future and we hope to see you soon!



Julie giving an introduction to the Trail of Tears Bike Tour



Julie testing her fire gear out for the rangers

Welcome!

Little Rock Central High National Historic Site is pleased to welcome Authur C. Smith Jr., of Luxora, Arkansas, to our staff. Authur is currently a student at Philander Smith College, located in Little Rock, Arkansas. He is in his fourth year at Philander Smith, majoring in Biology-PreMed. His plans for the future are to enroll in medical school and become a family physician with special emphasis in Internal Medicine and Molecular Epidemiology.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Little Rock Central High School
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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.



National Park Service
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Interior

This newsletter is brought to you by the staff of Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site.

Editor

Tarona Armstrong, Park Ranger

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Phone: (501) 374-1957
Fax: (501) 396-3001
Website: www.nps.gov/chsc
Email: chsc_visitor_center@nps.gov

Central High School Tours!

Join park rangers for regular scheduled tours of Central High School. Now you can tour the school, even if you do not have a reservation. Tours are offered on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday during the school year at 9:15 a.m. and again at 1:00 p.m. The tour lasts approximately 30 minutes.

Contact the site at 501-374-1957 for more information.

Park rangers are available to give tours of the visitor center exhibits, commemorative garden and the exterior of Central High School. Off-site visits for classes or groups can be arranged as well.

The new visitor center features interactive exhibits, audio/visual programs, and a bookstore with a wide selection of educational materials.

Contact a park ranger for more information on program topics and scheduled events. Reservations are required for tours and can be made by calling the park at (501) 374-1957.